

Message Text

SECRET

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ACTION SS-25

INFO OCT-01 ISO-00 SSO-00 NSCE-00 USSS-00 /026 W
-----281701 075218 /44

O 281605Z FEB 77
FM AMEMBASSY BOGOTA
TO SECSTATE WASHDC IMMEDIATE 149

S E C R E T BOGOTA 1884

EXDIS

E.O. 11652: GDS
TAGS: ASEC, CASC, PINS, CO
SUBJ: KIDNAPPING OF PC VOLUNTEER: SIRTEP 17

1. COUNTRY OFFICER COX (WHO WAS VISITING FROM WASHINGTON) AND LTCOL BARNES OF MILGP MET WITH MILITARY INTELLIGENCE CHIEF GENERAL MONTANEZ AT MINISTRY OF DEFENSE ON FEB 25. COX EXPLAINED HIS PARTICIPATION ON DEPT TASK FORCE, EXPRESSED APPRECIATION FOR ASSISTANCE AND COLLABORATION OF GENERAL MONTANEZ AND GOC, AND EXPRESSED CONCERN OF THE USG AND MRS. JENSON FOR STARR'S SAFE RELEASE. COX SAID HE HAD SPOKEN BY TELEPHONE WITH MRS. JENSON BEFORE DEPARTING FROM US, AND THAT HE PERSONALLY WANTED TO CONVEY HER ANXIETY TO GENERAL MONTANEZ. MONTANEZ STATED HIS BELIEF THAT STARR IS ALIVE AND BEING WELL CARED FOR BY THE FARC, AND REPEATED HIS PREVIOUS ESTIMATE THAT IT WOULD BE 15 TO 20 DAYS FROM THE DATE OF THE KIDNAPPING BEFORE ANY COMMUNICATIONS WOULD BE RECEIVED FROM THE KIDNAPPERS. MONTANEZ ALSO REPEATED HIS VIEW THAT IT WOULD BE COUNTERPRODUCTIVE FOR MRS. JENSON TO COME TO COLOMBIA AT PRESENT, IN THAT THE FARC MIGHT FORMULATE GREATER DEMANDS THAN IT OTHERWISE WOULD.

2. MONTANEZ BELIEVED THE KIDNAPPERS AND STARR HAVE
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PROBABLY BEEN MARCHING TO THE AREAS OF EL PATO OR GUAYABERRA ALONG THE BORDER OF THE DEPT OF CAQUETA AND HUILA. THESE ARE LARGE, DISPERSE BASE AREAS OF THE FARC'S SECOND FRONT, WHICH ALSO KIDNAPPED DUTCH HONORARY CONSUL LEUPIN, HE INDICATED. MONTANEZ STATED THAT THE FARC HAD LONG HELD SWAY IN THESE AREAS AND THAT THEY WERE PRACTICALLY OUTSIDE OF EFFECTIVE CONTROL BY THE

GOC. HE ESTIMATED THAT A MARCH FROM LA MACARENA TO THESE AREAS BY A DIRECT ROUTE WOULD PROBABLY TAKE FIVE TO SIX DAYS. BUT THAT KIDNAPPERS HAVE LIKELY TAKEN A LONGER, INDIRECT ROUTE TO AVOID CONTACT WITH THE COLOMBIAN ARMY. MONTANEZ STATED THAT COLOMBIAN TROOPS WERE NOW IN THE AREA TO GATHER INTELLIGENCE (I.E. WHAT ROUTES THE FARC MIGHT HAVE TAKEN, WHETHER ANYONE HAD SEEN STARR, ETC), BUT THAT THERE WAS NO INTENT TO CAPTURE THE KIDNAPPERS BY FORCE.

3. MONTANEZ WAS QUITE SURE THAT THE KIDNAPPERS DO NOT HAVE RADIO EQUIPMENT FOR INTERCHANGING MESSAGE FROM FARC POLITICAL COMMAND IN BOGOTA. HE BELIEVED ANY MESSAGES WOULD BE PASSED BY COURIERS.

4. MONTANEZ ASKED WHETHER THE LETTER FROM THE PEACE CORPS DIRECTOR HAD BEEN DELIVERED TO THE FARC, AND SEEMED TO PROBE FOR THE IDENTITY OF THE INTERMEDIARY. COX DID NOT IDENTIFY THE INTERMEDIARY, BUT SAID IT WAS HIS UNDERSTANDING THAT THE GIST OF THE HUMANITARIAN APPEAL, IF NOT THE EXACT TEXT OF THE MESSAGE, HAD REACHED THE FARC.

5. COX AND BARNES THANKED MONTANEZ FOR HIS CONTINUED COLLABORATION AND MONTANEZ PROMISED TO PROVIDE ANY INFORMATION ON THE KIDNAPPING WHICH BECOMES AVAILABLE. SANCHEZ

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Message Attributes

Automatic Decaptioning: Z
Capture Date: 01-Jan-1994 12:00:00 am
Channel Indicators: n/a
Current Classification: UNCLASSIFIED
Concepts: KIDNAPPING
Control Number: n/a
Copy: SINGLE
Sent Date: 28-Feb-1977 12:00:00 am
Decaption Date: 22 May 2009
Decaption Note: 25 YEAR REVIEW
Disposition Action: RELEASED
Disposition Approved on Date:
Disposition Case Number: n/a
Disposition Comment: 25 YEAR REVIEW
Disposition Date: 22 May 2009
Disposition Event:
Disposition History: n/a
Disposition Reason:
Disposition Remarks:
Document Number: 1977BOGOTA01884
Document Source: CORE
Document Unique ID: 00
Drafter: n/a
Enclosure: n/a
Executive Order: GS
Errors: N/A
Expiration:
Film Number: D770068-0991
Format: TEL
From: BOGOTA
Handling Restrictions:
Image Path:
ISecure: 1
Legacy Key: link1977/newtext/t1977024/aaaaadqc.tel
Line Count: 88
Litigation Code IDs:
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Office: ACTION SS
Original Classification: SECRET
Original Handling Restrictions: EXDIS
Original Previous Classification: n/a
Original Previous Handling Restrictions: n/a
Page Count: 2
Previous Channel Indicators: n/a
Previous Classification: SECRET
Previous Handling Restrictions: EXDIS
Reference: n/a
Retention: 0
Review Action: RELEASED, APPROVED
Review Content Flags:
Review Date: 05-Apr-2005 12:00:00 am
Review Event:
Review Exemptions: n/a
Review Media Identifier:
Review Release Date: n/a
Review Release Event: n/a
Review Transfer Date:
Review Withdrawn Fields: n/a
SAS ID: 3316790
Secure: OPEN
Status: NATIVE
Subject: KIDNAPPING OF PC VOLUNTEER: SIRTEP 17
TAGS: ASEC, CASC, PINS, CO, PC
To: STATE
Type: TE
vdkgvwkey: odbc://SAS/SAS.dbo.SAS_Docs/93334bc6-c288-dd11-92da-001cc4696bcc
Review Markings:
Margaret P. Grafeld
Declassified/Released
US Department of State
EO Systematic Review
22 May 2009
Markings: Margaret P. Grafeld Declassified/Released US Department of State EO Systematic Review 22 May 2009